

# NOVA University Network

## Annual Report 2011



**NOVA**  
UNIVERSITY NETWORK

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### Abbreviations of NOVA member institutions

AU-DJF	University of Aarhus, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences
HU-AF	University of Helsinki, Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry
HU-V	University of Helsinki, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
LBHI	Agricultural University of Iceland
LIFE	University of Copenhagen, Faculty of Life Sciences
NVH	Norwegian School of Veterinary Sciences
SLU	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
UEF-F (JU-F)	University of Eastern Finland, School of Forest Sciences (former University of Joensuu, Faculty of Forestry)
UMB	Norwegian University of Life Sciences

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Text (where nothing else stated) and layout: Þórunn Reykdal, central NOVA coordinator 2010-2011. Data reviewed by Terttu Virri, central NOVA coordinator.

Cover photo: NOVA-BOVA Nordplus Network information day in Jelgava, March 2011, Þórunn Reykdal.

## Words from the Chair

The year 2011 was characterized by implementation of new NOVA Strategy 2011-2014, followed by revised criteria for NOVA PhD course applications and further development of the NOVA database. The main aim of the revised strategy is to continue to focus on creating specialized PhD courses of high international standard and increase course quality, diversity and student mobility within MSc education.

Annual seminar 2011 on Education for Sustainable Development in a Nordic Life Science Perspective was held in Foulum and hosted by AU-DJF. In cooperation with the NOVA secretariat the NOVA local team and planning committee at AU-DJF were responsible for preparations for the seminar. For their excellent work and idyllic settings for the seminar I wish to thank, good cooperation between the secretariat and NOVA members is essential for growth of the NOVA network.

Promotion of NOVA was discussed at the annual seminar in Foulum and taken into account in NOVA budget for 2012. As in previous years NOVA's courses were generally highly valued by NOVA students and teachers involved. In line with the NOVA strategy the student evaluations of PhD courses are now formally taken into account during evaluation of PhD course applications.

Cooperation agreement from 2008 between NOVA and BOVA on joint activities had a closing date this year but was prolonged unchanged until spring of 2012 when it is to be discussed at the joint NOVA/BOVA seminar to be held in Tartu Estonia. NOVA KUF and BOVA CC have met at NOVA annual seminars and in Tartu discussions on joint activities within MSc education will be followed up from the annual seminar in May 2011.

It is of great importance for NOVA members to take an active part in the NOVA network and Agricultural University of Iceland has certainly gained from hosting the NOVA secretariat during the period of 2010 and 2011. For AUI Nordic cooperation plays a very important role in opening a window of opportunities for both students and teachers. We are proud to hand over the torch to Helsinki University who will chair NOVA and foster the NOVA secretariat for the next two years.

Hvanneyri, April 2012.



Ágúst Sigurðsson  
*Chair of NOVA Board 2010-2011*

# 1. Activity 2011

## 1.1 PhD education

During 2011 twenty one PhD courses were run, attracting total of 408 students and thereof 329 NOVA students. One course attracted more than 25 NOVA students, i.e. 31 students and four courses attracted more than total of 25 students. The courses were run by the universities as follows: AU-DJF two courses, HU-AF four courses, LBHI one course, LIFE five courses, SLU six courses, UEF-F one course and UMB two courses. Of these courses *Biosystems Instrumentation* was originally planned to be run by LIFE, but was moved to AU-DJF and the course *Public Policy for the Global Food Systems with Emphasis on Developing Countries*, which was postponed in 2010 was cancelled in 2011.

Table 1. NOVA PhD courses 2011

Network	Course Title	Host-Member	ECTS	No of NOVA students	Total No of students
AnimalNutrition	Ruminant lipid metabolism and product quality	HU-AF	3	19	25
Plant Breeding	Breeding for Adaptation to Climate Change	LBHI	6	24	28
Agriculture Economics	An introduction to the experimental economics method with applications to agriculture, forestry and environmental and natural resource economics	HU-AF	4	15	18
Animal Breeding	Methods and Constraints for Optimization of Animal Breeding Schemes	AU-DJF	5	18	25
Animal Breeding	Quantitative genetics with integration of genomic selection 2011	HU-AF	5	24	29
Veterinary Epidemiology	EpiNOVA Advanced Course - Infectious Disease Modelling	LIFE	5	13	17
Veterinary Epidemiology	EpiNOVA advanced course – Survival analysis	LIFE	5	10	12
Plant Pathology	Plant diseases; from survival to epidemics, and management strategies	UMB	5	24	26
BeeNOVA	Communication in Insects	HU-AF	4	5	11
Wood Technology	Wood structure and properties with a special emphasis on wood durability	SLU	3	4	12
Agriculture Engineering	Biosystems Instrumentation	AU-DJF	10	10	10
Agro Ecology	Organic Food and Farming Systems and Climate Change Mitigation	LIFE	4	15	16
Urban Forestry & Urban Greening	Urban Dendrology	SLU	4	11	12
Veterinary clinical research and scientific method	"Clinical and Biomedical Research and Scientific Methods.."	LIFE	6	19	20
Forest planning and inventory	Participatory planning	SLU	5	9	9
Forest planning and inventory	Decision-oriented data acquisition strategies for analysis of a sustainable forestry	UMB	5	19	19
Statistics in agriculture	Applied statistics with R for the agricultural, life and veterinary sciences	LIFE	6	31	38
Forest restoration	Forest restoration in theory and practice	SLU	4	11	16
Multifunctional forestry	Ecology and silviculture of multi-functional forests	SLU	7,5	10	16
Soil Zoology	13th Nordic Soil Zoology Symposium and PhD course	SLU	3	5	16
Global Food Policy	Public Policy for the Global Food System with Emphasis on Developing Countries	LIFE			Postponed in 2010, cancelled in 2011
Carbon dynamics in managed terrestrial ecosystems	Carbon dynamics in terrestrial ecosystems with implications for climate change mitigation	UEF-F	4	18	23
<b>Total</b>			<b>103,5</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>398</b>
<b>Average per course</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>

\* The course was moved from LIFE to AU-DJF

One course with allocated fund to be run in 2011 was moved to late fall 2010, attracting 12 NOVA students and total of 18 students and is not accounted with courses in 2011. Two calls for funding of applications for PhD courses were made in 2011; in the spring with deadline April 15<sup>th</sup> and in the fall with deadline October 15<sup>th</sup>. In 2010 NOVA KUF revised criteria for evaluation of NOVA PhD course applications and application documents were updated accordingly. The new criteria were put in effect during spring call 2011. The total of nineteen NOVA PhD course applications was submitted in 2011. Thirteen applications were submitted during spring call, whereof three were disapproved since they did not meet the given criteria and the applicants were welcomed to reapply in the fall. During autumn call six applications were submitted and approved. Approved applications were granted the total sum of 448.780 EUR and the Nordic Forest Research Co-operation Committee (SNS) supported one forestry related PhD course by 4.000 EUR.

*Table 2. Number of PhD courses and number of students 2003-2011.*

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of PhD courses	17	13	16	14	14	17	19	19	21
Number of NOVA PhD students registered on NOVA PhD course	270	186	162	200	197	264	301	331	304
Percentage NOVA PhD students in NOVA courses of the total number of PhD students on the NOVA member institutions	12,7	9,3	7,9	9,8	9,8	11,6	11,8	11,8	9,5

In 2011 fewer applications for NOVA PhD courses were submitted than in previous years. In 2009 total of 31 applications were submitted of which 19 applications were approved within the frame of the budget. In the year 2010 28 applications were submitted of which 22 were approved, the other six applications did not meet the given NOVA criteria, most commonly they were lacking in Nordic dimension. These results were met by revision of the criteria of evaluation of NOVA PhD course applications and revision of the application form in the NOVA database, in order to minimize the cases where applications for NOVA PhD courses would not meet the NOVA criteria. The reason for why numbers of applications in 2011 were much lower than in 2009 and 2010 could be explained by the fact that in 2009 NOVA was only able to approve 19 of 31 applications; however this was not examined by the secretariat. In 2011 the amount allocated for NOVA PhD courses was raised from 450.000 EUR to 550.000 EUR, the full amount was not used and as a result member-fee was lowered by the NOVA Board in October 2011.

The main aim of NOVA is to focus its efforts within PhD and MSc education, create specialized PhD courses of high international standard, and increase course quality, diversity and student mobility within MSc education; and the aim within PhD education for the strategic period of 2011-2014 is that by 2014 a total of 30 NOVA PhD courses should be arranged every year. An effort must be made on promotion of NOVA within the member universities in order to meet the set aims for the strategic period of 2011-2014.

## 1.2 MSc education

### 1.2.1 NOVA Intensive Master Courses

Four intensive courses (NIMC) were run during 2011 and two courses were cancelled; of which one was postponed in 2010 and then cancelled in 2011.

The given intensive master courses attracted 81 students with the average of 20.3 students per course (Table 3). Three of the run courses were NOVA Intensive Master Courses, one course, *Sustainable pig production* was supported by NOVA and run by the NOVA/BOVA Nordplus network. Courses on sustainable pig production had previously been given on BSc level; in 2011 the course was however changed to MSc level and held both in Alnarp and in Jelgava.

Table 3. NOVA intensive MSc courses (NIMC) 2011

Network	MSc Course Title	ECTS	Host	No of students			
				NOVA	BOVA	Other	Total
Plant Pathology	Molecular plant-microbe interactions laboratory course	3	HU-AF	30			30
NorPath/Plant Pathology	Plant pathology in a changing world 2011-2013	5	UMB	12		1	13
Developing New and Old Farm Buildings	Course for young planners: Developing new and old farm buildings		SLU				*
Soils and Society (SoilSoc)	Preservation of microorganisms in microbial resource centres	2	HU-AF	20		1	21
NOVA/BOVA	Sustainable pig production	5	SLU	5	12		17
SoilSoc	Remediation of Contaminated Soils	(5)	LIFE				**
		15		67	12	2	81
Average per course		3,75		16,8	3	0,5	20,3

**Comments:**

\*The course was postponed to 2011 and then cancelled in 2011

\*\*The course was cancelled in 2011

During 2011 the total of 13.200 EUR was allocated to NIMC, 21.000 EUR to projects, 22.395 EUR to planning and networking and 2.620 EUR for a start-up network meeting of Animal Welfare. No new Erasmus Mundus programmes were supported in 2011. On the budget for 2011 the total of 110.000 EUR was allocated to MSc/BSc courses, planning, networking and new areas (other activities than PhD level) of which 58% were used.

### 1.2.2 Mobility

The NOVA member hosting the NOVA secretariat also hosts the central coordinator of the NOVA-BOVA Nordplus network for two academic years. Nordplus offers grants for students and teachers and Nordplus coordinators at the NOVA member institutions are responsible for handling of Nordplus grant applications for student (and teacher) mobility.

The number of Master students receiving mobility support per academic year is shown in Table 4, grouped by express mobility (less than four weeks) and normal mobility (more than four weeks).

Table 4. Number of Master students per academic year 2003/04-2010/11 and fall 2011

	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	Fall 11
Number of Master students in standard Nordplus mobility (> 4 weeks)		68	37	52	53	23	29	39	21
Number of Master students in express Nordplus mobility (< 4 weeks)		17	35	50	73	69	70	66	12
TOTAL	55	85	72	102	126	92	99	105	33
Percentage MSc students participating in Nordplus mobility	1,5	2,3	2,0	2,8	3,3	2,4	2,3	1,8 %	

Mobility of NOVA students going on standard mobility, more than four weeks is growing between the academic years of 09/10 and 10/11 but fewer students applied for express Nordplus mobility, less than four weeks. However it is worth noting that 2009/2010 was the first year of the combined NOVA/BOVA Nordplus Network and therefore actual mobility is higher, as shown in the appendix to the report.

### 1.2.3 NOVA/BOVA Nordplus Network

From the Nordic Council of Ministers (CIMO) The NOVA /BOVA Nordplus network was granted money to run four intensive courses in 2010/2011. These courses were: *Evaluation of Quality of Poultry Meat and Eggs, Economics and Management of Rural Development, Forest Tree Breeding and Adaption and Renewable Energy Technologies*. These courses attracted 89 students of which 29 were NOVA students.

NOVA/BOVA Nordplus coordinators held a joint meeting with study advisors in Jelgava in Latvia in March 2011, where an information day was held at Lithuanian University of Agriculture.

### 1.3 Annual seminar

The Annual Seminar 2011 on Education for Sustainable Development in a Nordic Life Science Perspective was hosted by AU-DJF and held in Research Centre Foulum near Viborg in Mid-Jutland. The seminar attracted 75 participants and the programme included presentations, workshops and panel discussions.

Keynote speech was given by Professor Jeppe Læssøe at Danish School of Education, where the UN-RCE approach to implementing education for sustainable development was introduced. Sustainable growth through innovation, strategy and approach to sustainable education and research was discussed by Aarhus School of Business and the Arla Foods company introduced their approach to sustainability. From the NOVA members many interesting topics were addressed and the presentations are found on the NOVA homepage.

Photo: Janne Hansen





Among the seminar conclusions on education for sustainable development was that for NOVA it is essential to increase efforts to offer courses and programs focusing on sustainability.

To tackle today's and tomorrow's challenges with an increasing population, pressure on world resources and global climate changes is a long term process, which among other things requires that people's habits and mindsets must be changed. Universities need to train the next generation of leaders, experts, politicians and teachers to disseminate research-based knowledge that can help solve these problems.

Subtheme at the seminar was promotional campaign, therefore information officers of the NOVA members were specially invited to attend the seminar and a workshop on promotion of NOVA; where NOVA Student Board (NSB) also took an active part. As a result of the seminar promotional campaign was put on the budget for 2012 and the first aim is to draw an action plan on promotional campaign.

The NOVA local team and planning committee at AU-DJF were responsible for preparations and arrangements at Foulum and provided excellent settings for the seminar.

#### **1.4 NOVA Student Board**

The NOVA Student Board (NSB) is a freestanding organisation with support from NOVA, giving student's voice into the NOVA network, where NSB has representatives in NOVA Board, KUF and NOVA Executive Committee (EC). NSB held three meetings in 2011 and their representatives participated actively in Annual seminar, NOVA Board and KUF bringing up matter of discussion, such as promotional campaign, which has been taken into account in the budget of 2011 and 2012. Anna Berg Samúelsdóttir acted as chair of NSB from May 2010 until May 2011, when Kristian Krag was elected chair of NSB.

#### **1.5 NOVA Organizational Bodies**

The NOVA Board held three meetings during the year, a video-meeting in January, in Foulum in May and at LIFE in Copenhagen in October. The Committee for Education and Research (KUF) held four meetings during 2011, two video-meetings, one meeting at UMB in Ås and another at LIFE in Copenhagen. Minutes from the Board and KUF meetings are available on NOVA's home page.

#### **1.6 Other activities**

In November Lena Anderson Eklund KUF member at SLU and Þorbjörg Valdís Kristjánsdóttir NOVA/BOVA Nordplus Coordinator at LBHI were invited to attend the Danube Regional Conference where the NOVA-BOVA network was introduced as an example of a regional strategy.

#### **1.7 NOVA Secretariat**

All PhD course applications have been hosted in the NOVA database developed by SLU, in 2011 the database was developed further and from 2012 all NOVA applications will be hosted in the database, which will in the future be of convenience for rotation of the secretariat every second year. From



January 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 the secretariat will rotate from Agricultural University of Iceland to University of Helsinki, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences. Preparations were made for the rotation, the becoming central coordinator visited LBHI for a week in December and the Icelandic secretariat overlapped into January in order to ensure smooth rotation.

In October in conjunction with a Board meeting the central coordinator attended an information day on NOVA at SLU in Uppsala and introduced NOVA to SLU's staff and participated in discussions, both on site and through video at Alnarp and Umeå. In the future this could be considered a good way for the central NOVA coordinator to get acquainted with NOVA member's staff and also one way of promoting the network within the NOVA member institutions.

## **2. Financial accounts 2011**

The NOVA Profit and loss report is presented in Table 5 and Balance Statement in Table 6. Previous years the account has been influenced by currency fluctuations, but from 2010, when the secretariat moved to LBHI in Iceland accounting was done in EUR. Most of the costs are handled directly from the EUR account, but LBHI has included currency loss in the secretariat costs, which inevitably occurs in handling of travel and other costs for NSB and the secretariat where credit card is needed.

The main external source of funding has as previously been the Nordic Council of Ministers via the Nordplus framework programme for mobility and other projects. Support has also been given by the Nordic forest Research Cooperation Committee (SNS). Equity build up in 2011 is extremely high, mainly as a result of much higher regained project grants (funding not used) due to seven declared cancelled courses allocated in the period of 2007-2009.

Table 5 . Profit and loss report 2011 and budget 2012 (Euro)

	2011		% budget	2012 Budget
	Budget	31.12.2011		
<b>Member fees</b> <sup>1</sup>				
AU-DJF	35.936	24.077	67%	85.275
HU-AF	73.651	49.346	67%	68.807
HU-V	22.573	15.124	67%	20.012
LBHI	10.302	6.902	67%	5.672
LIFE	161.904	108.476	67%	148.928
NVH	32.606	21.846	67%	30.356
SLU	227.813	152.635	67%	200.720
UEF-F	14.953	10.018	67%	14.614
UMB	140.262	93.975	67%	105.618
<b>Total Member fees</b>	<b>720.000</b>	<b>482.399</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>680.000</b>
External funding <sup>2</sup>	50.000	60.000	120%	89.100
<b>Total Fees &amp; Ext. fund.</b>	<b>770.000</b>	<b>542.399</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>769.100</b>
<b>Activities</b>				
PhD courses <sup>3</sup>	-550.000	-529.751	96%	-450.000
Other projects				
MSc/BSc courses planning/networking /new areas/NOVA Prize	-110.000	-63.344	58%	-110.000
NOVA N+ guarantee and Nordplus support	-60.800	-53.285	88%	-65.000
External projects/Nordplus	-50.000	-60.000	120%	-89.100
Promotional campaign <sup>4</sup>	-10.000	0	0%	-10.000
NOVA database development	-15.000	-12.672	84%	
NSB	-21.000	-19.641	94%	-21.000
Annual seminar	-25.000	-25.000	100%	-25.000
<b>Total Activities</b>	<b>-841.800</b>	<b>-763.693</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>-770.100</b>
Regained project grants (funding not used) <sup>4</sup>	65.000	128.876	198%	50.000
<b>Secretariat</b>				
Salaries	-69.400	-68.346	98%	-75.200
Travels <sup>5</sup>	-10.000	-11.360	114%	-10.000
Other	-15.000	-15.000	100%	-15.000
<b>Total Secretariat</b>	<b>-94.400</b>	<b>-94.706</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-100.200</b>
<b>Total Activities&amp;Secr.</b>	<b>-871.200</b>	<b>-729.523</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>-820.300</b>
	<b>-101.200</b>	<b>-187.124</b>	<b>185%</b>	
Internal interest <sup>6</sup>	2.000	4.838	242%	0
<b>Result</b>	<b>-99.200</b>	<b>-182.286</b>	<b>184%</b>	<b>-51.200</b>
<b>Calculation of Equity</b>				
Equity 2010-12-31	159.296			
Equity 2011-12-31		<b>-22.990</b>		
Prognosed Equity 2012-12-31				-74.190

<sup>1</sup> Memberfee was lowered by 33% by the Board (60.5)

<sup>2</sup> Nordplus: 20.000 for courses, 36.000 for mobility. SNS: 4.000 for PhD courses

<sup>3</sup> Based on 9 reported and 13 non-reported PhD courses, budget year 2011

<sup>4</sup> Postponed until 2012

<sup>4</sup> Regained is based on 33 reported projects, whereof 18 are PhD courses and 7 courses from 2007-2009 declared cancelled in December 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Travelcost above the budget due to rotating secretariat

<sup>6</sup> Interest higher in 2011 than predicted

### Balance statement 2011 (Euro)

Assets	31.12.2010	31.12.2011
Cash	712.826	414.783
Internal	24.100	61.167
Other	20.000	
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>756.926</b>	<b>475.950</b>

Equity and Liabilities			
Equity		-159.296	
	2011-31-12		
Result 2011:	-182.286		-22.990
Allocated funding	Internal	-516.620	-452.960
	External		
Notes payable		-81.010	
Unpaid salary			
		<b>-756.926</b>	<b>-475.950</b>

  
Landbúnaðarskóli Íslands  
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The Annual Report 2011 was accepted by the NOVA Board on 5.2.2013 (Board minutes 64.6).